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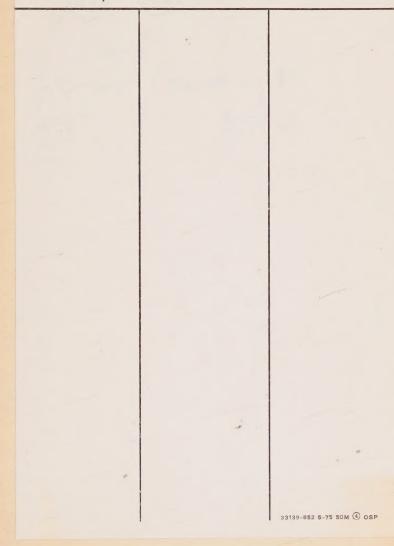
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# LADDERS THROUGH THE BLUE

# BOOKS BY HERMANN HAGEDORN

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## Addresses

Where Do You Stand? You Are the Hope of the World!

## Editor

THE MEMORIAL EDITION OF THE WORKS OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT

# Ladders Through the Blue

A Book of Lyrics

By Hermann Hagedorn



Garden City New York Doubleday, Page & Company 1925

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FIRST EDITION

# TO A CERTAIN FOUR



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# PART I



# LADDERS THROUGH THE BLUE

THE EYES OF GOD

I see them nightly in my sleep.
The eyes of God are very deep.
There is no cave, no sea that knows
So much of unplumbed depth as those,
Or guards with walls or spectres dumb
Such treasures for the venturesome.

I feel them burning on my back. The eyes of God are very black. There is no substance and no shade So black as God His own eyes made; In earth or heaven no night, no day, At once so black, so bright as they.

I see them wheresoe'er I turn.
The eyes of God are very stern.
The eyes of God are golden fires
That kindle beacons, kindle pyres;
And where like slow moon-rays they pass
They burn up dead things as dry grass.

They wait, and are not hard to find. The eyes of God are very kind. They have great pity for weak things And joy in everything with wings; And glow, beyond all telling bright, Each time a brave soul dares a flight.

## THE GHOST

One whom I loved and never can forget
Returned to me in dream, and spoke with me
As audibly, as sweet familiarly
As though warm fingers twined warm fingers yet.
Her eyes were bright and with great wonder wet
As in old days when some strange, swift decree
Brought touch-close love or death; and sorrowfree
She spoke, as one long purged of all regret.

I heard, oh, glad beyond all speech, I heard;
Till to my lips the flaming query flashed:

How is it—over there? Then, quite undone,
She trembled; in her deep eyes like a bird
The gladness fluttered, and as one abashed
She shook her head, bewildered, and was gone.

## THE CABARET DANCER

Breathe not the word To-morrow in her ears.

To-morrow is for men who send their sails
Over the sea for gems and silken bales;
For dreamers, dawdlers, martyrs, pioneers,
Not for this leaf on the high bough that hears
Nor sound nor echo, prophesying gales—
Eyes of the swallow, dancing through the veils,
Heart of the swallow, knowing not the years.

Breathe not a word of beauty that shall fade;
Of lagging steps, of bare and lonely sorrow
On roads that other dancing feet have tound
Beyond the hills where life with laughter played.
Breathe not a word of that grim land To-morrow
Lest she should quake to powder at the sound.

#### THE DINER IN SCARLET

You see a languid river flowing down
Through opulent valleys to a rainbow town;
And on a barge on silks and pillows sighing
You see your indolent, soft body lying;
With maids who flatter as they comb your gold,
And waiters who bring birds on golden dishes,
While your white fingers, long and slim and cold,
Dip in a bowl and toy with golden fishes.

I see a hallroom with a squeaking jet,
And last year's clothes, and broken plumes, and
debt;

And raucous tongues and lifted brows and jeers And howling emptiness, and years and years; The day a hell of dreams and obscene hoping, The dark a dead world, where a frozen soul Sits at a window with cold fingers groping Vainly for goldfish in an empty bowl.

#### THE BIRTHDAY

Do you remember, where you bide,
This day that meant so much of old?
It never comes, but undenied
The memories come and hold
Faint revels, echoing the mirth
That was our glad Te Deum for your birth.

Do you remember now the friends
Who brought their gifts of love and wit?
They are dispersed. The gayest wends
As you, an infinite
Strange way. Do you recall him yet?
And would you recognize him if you met?

I wonder who walks with you now?
From that eternal company
What spirits, pure of eyes and brow,
In calm felicity
Companion you? What new-found friends
Find in your love the heaven where sorrow ends?

Do you remember us at all
Who mourned your wayfaring, and mourn
Even now, missing your dear footfall?
And are you, too, forlorn,
Seeing us struggle, hard-beset?
Ah, mourn no more for us. Forget, forget.

We would not have your new heart's-ease
Marred by a single pang for us,
Who sail yet venturesome the seas
For dim ports perilous.
Lock, lock the door on dreams of home.
Fear not. We will unlock it when we come.

#### LEONORA

(Who went forth, at sixteen)

Is THE night bleak and is the crossing dark? Silent beneath the mists the shining sea Dreams of eternal things; the moving prow Wakes scarce a murmur.

Look, how straight she steers!
So white, so silent at the helm! The fog
In gray, ethereal veils envelops her,
Dissolves, returns. How steady is her eye,
Her hand, how sure! What beacon through these
fogs,
What light does she discern?

Sweet child, farewell! She is the night's . . .

# Music!

Above the mists, A star—a thousand! Look, the fogs fade, melt, Withdraw! There! At the helm! Against the dark, How white, how shining!

## Music!

See! Beyond
The dismal crossing, summits! Lights!
Youth comes to greet her! From the hills
The golden girls and boys, with lights, run down
To the bright cove whither she steers so straight.
Where, on our earth, was brightness like to this?
Where, on our earth, such singing? How their feet
Run down the slopes! The grass itself makes
music!

# Leonora

The air glows with the burning of their hearts! Their hands outstretched are little flames of love!

What is this sea between that isle and this? What if it were not *there*, a thing to cross, But *here*—silent, profound, within the heart, The mist-hung evocation of black dreams? What if we woke—and there were no more sea?

Hark, through the strains, what cadences uproll! The hills speak and the deep. The stars give voice. Out of the infinite vast, first low, then loud, The infinite chorus chants
The deathless Father and the deathless Child.

Her foot is on the shore! The sands themselves Make music for her welcome. Hark, her name, Over the thronging, animate radiance Runs like the wind of morning over leaves. She is with friends; forever beautiful, Forever young, forever bathed in light. Her very breathing in and out is music.

#### WHEN I CONSIDER THE HEAVENS

CHRIST has achieved his work, maybe,
Somewhere in that white galaxy.
On that clear star that cleaves the night,
Or on some half-hid satellite,
A race may dwell more wise than we.

Who knows? In night's immensity
What towns may glow by truth set free?
What eyes burn where in death's despite
Christ has achieved?

Of all this starry company,
Who knows?—we may be last to see
The hollow gain of hands that smite!
Still vaunting our poor, mortal might,
While roundabout eternally
Christ has achieved.

## THE VANISHED SCHOOLMASTER

I HEAR him laughing down the hall somewhere
To think that anyone should call him dead
Or talk as though the best of him had fled
To some blue haven of the upper air.
Make no mistake. Joyous, and strong to bear
Burdens, he walks these halls, high-spirited,
With you and me in his great heart and head.
We may not see his face; but he is there.

And he will still be there when you and I
Climb feebly the long hill and turn to view
Our gaudier grandeur and our noisier fame,
And see a desert; while afar his cry
Shakes into manhood boys he never knew
And kindles hearts that never heard his name.

#### THE MAN WHO SANG

HE RUNS no more, light-footed, on high hills,
Where beautiful weeds bend with a laugh from
the wind;

He has forsaken his dear fairy kind
And sharpens now no wild swan's magical quills.
He has rejected Music, and he fills
With a stern god the house where she was shrined;
He is a citizen, of sober mind,
And like a sober man he pays his bills.

But there are days—! Somewhere a flute starts in, Somewhere a horn, somewhere a violin!

A lute, a harp, like silver waters falling!

Then through his ordered being sweeps unrest;

For when he hears his lost beloved calling

There is no peace for him save on her breast.

#### YOU WHO LOVE BEAUTY

(Rondel on the Flyleaf of an Anthology of Verse)

You who love beauty, why the many tears?
Shall those who see more sad be than the blind?
Why will you send your sobbing down the wind
To win from the unseeing, laughter and jeers?

For you the dawn a shining palace rears
Where singing Hours undying garlands bind.
You who love beauty, why the many tears?
Shall those who see more sad be than the blind?

The unseeing have no balm for painful years.

To you, uncalled, comes wonder, shy and kind.

Oh, heart, what warmth! what light, oh, troubled mind!

Beauty is joy, though it be ringed with spears!

You who love beauty, why the many tears?

#### LADDERS THROUGH THE BLUE

I have climbed ladders through the blue! For apples some, and some for heaven! The rungs of some were six and seven, But some no earthly number knew.

Some were of oak and some of dew,
Some spider-woven, zephyr-riven.
I have climbed ladders through the blue!
For apples some and some for heaven!

The tallest, firmest—ah, too few!—
Were of such substance as at even
By radiant hands to the awed heart is given;
And, oh, the pure air, oh, the view,
Climbing the ladders through the blue!





#### THE CLOCK

HEART against my heart,
Slumber sound,
Roundabout rise the odors
From the dewy ground;
Overhead the heavens
Make their silent round.

The heavens are a clock.
All day, all night,
The crystal wheels are turning,
Planet and satellite;
The crystal gems are blinking
Pure, steadfast, white.

On each star, a seraph
With shimmering folded wings
To music like faint fragrance
Sets trembling silver strings;
At the centre sits
Love that moves all things.

Not remote, unguided,
Lost in space we reel;
Not from far-off beacons
A mirrored glow we steal;
Through us roll the heavens,
And with the stars we wheel.

Close against my heart,
Stay, stay!
So my listening heart
All night, all day,
Shall hear the great clock ticking
The holy hours away.

#### SANCTUARY

OH, BIRD, thou hast a cozy nest!
So feathered warm thou art
Beneath the close, protecting breast,
Beside the glowing heart.

Thou hear'st her tears before they flow, Before they cry, her pains; Thou hear'st the rapture come and go Along her singing veins.

Thou hear'st To-morrow when he shakes
Her heart to sobs or song,
And Yesterday's sweet lure that makes
Her restless all night long.

Thou see'st I give strike down I want;
To Mine, Thine bow the knee;
The wonder of what was, confront
The joy of what shall be.

Oh, bird, thou hast a cozy nest,
For round thee, holily,
Her thoughts keep watch, and when they rest,
Her dreams bend over thee.

#### A TRAVELER FROM A DISTANT LAND

It's a long journey through the stellar spaces,
And, boy, we're glad it's over and you're here;
No more alone on that ethereal mere,
But safe abed and watched by friendly faces.
We hope you'll like us and our earthly places.
You'll find us kindly on the whole, though queer;
Not ever quite so bad as we appear,
And at our maddest not without our graces.

And here you are to live and help us live.

Bend close and listen, bird with folded wings.

Here is life's secret: Keep the upward glance!

Remember Aries is your relative,

The Moon's your uncle, and those Twinkling

Things

Your sisters and your cousins and your aunts.

17

#### EVENING PRAYER

SHE sang her little bedtime air, And drowzy-wise she spoke her prayer.

And as she spoke I saw the room Open and stretch and glow and bloom;

And in her eyes I saw a ring Of heaven's angels, listening.

### MARY'S EYES

You see the wood-folk where they run
From cover, like blown leaves, to cover.
You see the sea-folk in the spray,
Thrashing the wave in elfish glee.
You pierce disguises every one,
And 'neath the blackest you discover
An airy comrade for your play
Whom God thought only he could see.

## "GOING ON FIVE"

A LITTLE like a rabbit,
A little like a bird,
A humming-bird, a butterfly,
Oh, very like a butterfly,
A darting fish, a squirrel shy,
A kitten, gay, absurd!

A little like a fountain,
Half laughter and half light,
A little like a poplar leaf,
Whose language has no word for grief,
Oh, very like a quivering leaf,
Half mortal and half sprite.

A little like a rainbow,
A little like the rain
That wakes the green eyes in the clod,
A little like the hand of God,
Oh, very like the hand of God,
Upon a heart in pain.

### INVITATION TO FAIRYLAND

If You'll go with me some soft warm night When over the woods the moon is bright, When the birds are asleep and the fireflies glow And the crickets are gay and the bats swoop low; When the darting witch-fires coldly gleam And all but you and me are a-dream, I'll creep to your door and take your hand And steal with you over to Fairyland.

We'll cross the bridge at Camelot.
Where the two green goblins mutely squat,
With daisy dust on a blade of grass
And syllables seven to be our pass;
And with sounds like glass the wind sets tinkling
You'll hear the gates swing, in a twinkling.
I know the syllables, never fear.
But you must stay near, stay near.

Under the bridge when the wizard Day
With his rosebud broom sweeps the stars away,
Bright as laughter and white as milk
The water ripples like beautiful silk;
It glows like a large, expectant eye
When he stands at the peak of the cloudless sky;
But when at last on the mountain rims
The splendor dies in his drowsy limbs
And, out of the forest, silence creeps
And the shadows gather, the mists rise up,
Then, under the bridge, the water sleeps
Like a magical drink in an emerald cup.

It's then, if you bend low over the rail, It may be you'll see a shimmering sail And a crystal skiff that strangely gleams With amber light in the faint moonbeams.

## Invitation to Fairyland

Ulysses, you know, long, long ago, Went sailing so, with his trusted band; And there are tales that still he sails After golden whales in Fairyland. He might not, he *might* not be sailing that night; But you never can tell! He might, he *might*!

The woods are dark beyond the bridge,
But there will be lights on the shadowy ridge
And a faint and many-colored glowing
As though a giant a bubble were blowing,
Where faintly shone, in a magical dawn,
Wonderful faces that gleamed and were gone.
And there will be rustling of leaves; and after—
If you listen hard—far fairy laughter.

If you are to see all that you might,
The air must be still and the moon must be right—
Not too crescent and not too round,
Too clear in the sky, too pale on the ground;
But hung with vapors through which at whiles
The mother of all wood-magic smiles,
Seeing the swinging, by fingers and toes,
From the silvery ladder she trails where she goes.

You must stay close, and clasp my hand As we climb the steep into Fairyland; And whatever you see, whatever you hear, You must have no fear, you must have no fear. Though the hands be tender that guard your day These are a closer kin than they; And though you range and though you roam, The shimmering world-within-worlds is home.

If you'll go with me some fragrant night When the moon is bright, and not too bright,

### Invitation to Fairyland

When the dripping water-wheel moves slow, And in Glastonbury the lights are low, And music runs like summer rains Down from your heart through your singing veins, I'll creep to your door and take your hand And steal with you over to Fairyland.

### WARNING TO CHILDREN

I wouldn't go out, I wouldn't go out When the birds go in and the bats come out; When the great red cat crawls into the hay And the mice, the mice come out and play, The little white mice with the little white eyes That know more things that make men wise Than anything else in the world their size. They never wink, they never blink, But all night long they stare and think Of giggling girls and terrible boys And how they would like to get at the brat Who all one day in a corner sat And came out, and invented Noise. I wouldn't go out, I wouldn't go out When the watchful, wise little mice are out; The mice are many and children few, And it might not be good, it might not be good, It might not be good for you!

I wouldn't go out, I wouldn't go out
When the wallowing goblins are about.
They may be old, they may be fat,
But where is the help for you in that
If they clutch your leg with a cold green hand
And make you wash the dishes for the goblin band?

You wouldn't like the goblins and you wouldn't like their ways,

For you never know what's going on behind their fishy gaze.

They might seem very kind to you, and never care a jog,

And one fine morning you might wake and find yourself a frog.

I wouldn't go out, I wouldn't go out When the green, galumphing bands are about.

## Warning to Children

Their food is spiders cooked in glue, And it might not be good, it might not be good, It might not be good for you!

I wouldn't go out, I wouldn't go out
When the flimmering flibbertigibbets are out.
In bogs and swamps they have their camps
And their legs are threads and their faces lamps,
And all the time between dark and day
With larking and sparking they fritter away.
They lured a girl once from her bed
And set a green lamp on her head
And the things they taught that good little girl
Were more than seven preachers could ever uncurl.
She never would sleep, she never would sit,
But all day she would dance, and all night she would
flit.

Though her mother'd protest and her father'd

prohibit

Till at last she turned into a flibbertigibbet. I wouldn't go out, I wouldn't go out When the flibbertigibbets hover about, They might make you dance all night through—Which might not be good, which might not be good, Which might not be good for you.

### SONG FOR A SICK LADY

I wish that in the Book of Words Were wingèd syllables, like birds, Which on occasion one might send To fly all day about a friend. With many a soft and sighing sound To fly around and yet around, And with white, warding wings all day To chase the gnomes of pain away.

I wish that from the tumbling streams
That generate our acts and dreams
Love might leap forth, in fiery flight,
In one hand, power; in one hand, light!
And set black corridors to glow,
And frozen blood to thaw and flow,
And bring to workshops, mute for years,
The thundering of belts and gears.

### PHILEMON TO BAUCIS

Always the same surprise,
How fair you are!
Who said all beauty dies?
Your beauty, glory-wise,
Time deepens, sanctifies;
It cannot mar.
Always the same surprise,
How fair you are!

#### THE MOTHER IN THE HOUSE

For such as you, I do believe, Spirits their softest carpets weave, And spread them out with gracious hand Wherever you walk, wherever you stand.

For such as you, of scent and dew Spirits their rarest nectar brew, And where you sit and where you sup Pour beauty's elixir in your cup.

For all day long, like other folk, You bear the burden, wear the yoke, And yet when I look in your eyes at eve You are lovelier than ever, I do believe.

#### SOLOMON

Under the sun, groaned Solomon, There is no new thing, no, not one. Nothing by man or God devised Holds any wonder, unsurmised; And in no throat of woman or bird Sleeps any note man hath not heard. New things are but old things reborn; There is one wisdom, which is scorn.

Solomon, you had too many wives, Whose little hands held little knives That softly on your splendor crept And stabbed your vision as you slept. Solomon, in too many eyes You sought the elusive, beautiful prize. Only the steadfast and the true Find that which is forever new.



# PART III



### DIANA

SHE died a long, long time ago And lies where silver rivers flow; Watched by ten thousand glistening eyes On lavender and gold she lies.

There are no words in any tongue To tell how fair she seems, how young; Set high apart from earth and change, Familiar, and forever strange.

She had a lover and her light Met his and made a noon of night. She died; and now his light alway Makes of her night a silver day.

Unmoved, the snow-queen of the rhyme, She lies, a lily snatched from time; But when love waiks in grassy dells Her loveliness works miracles.

### MIDSUMMER EVE

Soft at your ear the evening hums Golden, melodious bars; Over the fields the fairy drums Waken the fairy stars.

On silken shoes from leafy screens
The shy unseen assemble.
Hark! how the elfin tambourines
Set the night air a-tremble.

This is not earth. We have strayed far.
Infinitudes removed from this,
Earth floats, a hot and troubled star,
Somewhere in the abyss.

This is the world where, legend saith,
After life's fierce ado,
God lets the tired ghosts catch their breath
A million years or two.

He knows that, having yearned and striven And prayed and kept the Law, We need a rest, this side of heaven, From earnestness and awe;

A rest from splendor as from grime, From light, from speed, a place Of dim groves with no heights to climb Even to thrones of grace;

But wide trees, fragrance, flitting lights, And deep pools, dark as wells; And friendly, grave, ungodly sprites Ringing faint fairy bells.

#### HOW SPRING CAME TO NEW YORK

Between the windy dusk and the first pale light Spring came with breezes and fragrance. Tiptoe through the night

Into the city she came. The city lay dumb.

Its millions of eyes saw not the light Spring come. They saw not the light feet dance with quick, sharp

tread,

They saw not the twinkling fingers, the arms outspread,

The eyes half open, the lips half open, the hair Blown back and about on the frolicsome April air. The millions slept with their tumult of hammers and wheels.

They saw not the Spring nor the troop that danced at her heels,

Singers and fiddlers and pipers and children with lyres,

Painters with brushes and colors, and kindlers of fires,

Maidens with lutes and citherns and youths with harps,

Clowns with parody-melodies' flats and sharps, Men with horns and boys with trumpets that rang, Babies with bells that tinkled and twinkled and sang!

The millions slept. They saw not the blithe rout sway

With the flutes' high twiddledeedee up stern Broadway.

The towers looked down, the windows stared in surprise,

The arc-lights sputtered and winked their soulless eyes,

For wherever the stony wilderness showed a tree Spring and her covey stopped, and ardently

## How Spring Came to New York

Spring blessed the boughs and bade the cold sap run; And at each tree, in parting, at each one, She left a fiddler or a cithern-player To lure the leaves out with some magic air.

Ah, but the parks were scenes of revelry!
The crocus buds threw back their quilts to see,
The grass awoke, the worms and beetles heard,
And down the corridors sent the wonderful word,
Down the corridors winding through cool brown
earth

They sent the echoing, rapturous gospel of mirth. "Heigh-ho!" cried Spring. "Lay your ear to the ground, and hark!

The grubs are stirring and stretching down there in the dark.

Listen! The voice of the slug-king, calling to war: 'Awake, O slugs! and pillage the world once more!'" 'Awake!" echoes the hollow, "Awake!" the sky,

"Awake!" cries Spring, and "Awake!" her minions

"Awake!" sing the fiddles in music richer than words,

"Awake!" to the sparrows chirp the returning birds; And the sparrows that hate themselves and despise their kind,

Cheep, hop, and turn in the warm, low, cleansing wind.

"Ai-ah!" cries Spring, and "Ai-ah!" echoing purr Rebeck and fife and gittern and dulcimer. And "Ai-ah!" in swelling murmur, first soft, "Ai-ah!" then louder, "Ai-ah!" surges aloft. "Ai-ah! Oh, earth, forget the pain and the storm! Ai-ah! Ai-ah! Oh, cold, white stars, grow warm!

## How Spring Came to New York

Ai-ah!" What music of psaltery, oboe, and flute, What rapturous risings and fallings of viol and lute, What calls of one to another, what jubilant hails, What sparkling of eyes and teeth, what flowing of veils,

What bendings of bodies in laughter, what impudent

skips,

What jubilant cartwheels, undulant snap-the-whips, What rushing of feet, what flame-like blowing of hair,

What rampant revel let loose in Madison Square!

The millions slept. The millions were deaf and blind.

But into their turbulent dreams the new warm wind Brought far-off flute notes and faint echoings Of tremulous, bewitching cithern strings, That traveled strangely into their dreams' waste

places.

Waking new hope, old love, and dear lost faces. All night the fiddles poured clear, silver streams Across a weary city's arid dreams, And when the last note fell, all quavering, The millions woke, tingling, and whispered,

"Spring!"

### AUTUMN IN THE CONNECTICUT HILLS

THE damp October chill is on the fields
And leaves are falling silently, one by one,

And lying where they fall as though they were weary

Of changing winds, and glad that summer was done.

The ancient hickory is growing sparse,
And one by one like snowflakes gathering
His leaves flutter and fall and lie quiet
In the sandbox and around the deserted swing.

The bark of dogs is clearer than it was,
And the hoot of motor-horns more harsh and
shrill:

And again by the ice-house, through the heavy shell-barks,

Loom the grim cedars on the neighbor's hill.

The pond is dark and glassy and the ducks look cold.

The pasture is yellow with leaves and the cows wait,

Gloomily eyeing the road for the tardy farmhand And the call they know and the click of the iron gate.

The sunflowers droop, nipped by the first light frost, The sweet corn stands dead and brown in the rows.

But the pumpkin shines like a sun through a gray dusk,

And beyond in the harrow-lanes the new rye shows.

### Autumn in the Connecticut Hills

Yellow, brown, and again the dark, stiff boughs.

I wish we had maples here. These hickories
Turn rusty, deathlike, and shake their limbs and are
naked,

Less like Fall than a slow, desiccating disease.

This is the time of year to remember vows, Broken; shrill words; and torches that went out; And dreams that set their faces toward high mountains,

And went a little way and turned about.

This is the time for biting memories.

The leaves flutter and fall and lie still, below . . .

And for no reason under heaven I am haunted

By the friend I lost, blundering, ten years ago.

### THE LARCH

Some day when the moon and the stars are right and the wind is warm from the South

And a world at peace is sending its thoughts like doves through the heavenly arch,

A god of the woods will see fit to lay a burning coal on my mouth

And let me sing as a poet should sing of the beauty and grace of a larch.

But such as I am, a human thing, with only my human speech,

What can Î do but stand and stare, blessing the joy that you are?

With hands outstretched for the perfect word, a little beyond the reach,

In its palace of roses and thorns, a-slumber, white in the light of a star.

### PARADISE FOUND

The pine spoke, but the word he said was "Silence";

The aspen sang, but silence was her theme. The wind was silence, restless; and the voices Of the bright forest-creatures were as silence Made vocal in the topsy-turvy of dream.

### EARLY MORNING AT BARGIS

CLEAR air and grassy lea,
Stream-song and cattle-bell—
Dear man, what fools are we
In prison-walls to dwell!
To live our days apart
From green things and wide skies,
And let the wistful heart
Be cut and crushed with lies!

Bright peaks! And suddenly
Light floods the placid dell.
The grass-tops brush my knee:
A good crop it will be,
So all is well!
O man, what fools are we
In prison-walls to dwell!

#### THE CITY

I came from green hills and clear air, And, oh, how old you seemed!— Where pitiless the morning streamed Across the lines of lust and care.

Half I remembered shining hair
And eyes where light and laughter gleamed—
I came from green hills and clear air
And, oh, how old you seemed!

I searched your face, and it was fair;
Your lips, your brow, where once I deemed
Beauty herself on lilies dreamed;
I found no spark of magic there.
I came from green hills and clear air.

#### FLOOD TIDE

Such quiet gray and green! Such peaceful farms! No whistle here, no horn, no clamorous swarms! Only the bay's low rippling on the beach, The spruce's murmuring, the reed's faint speech. Oh, sweet and moody twilight, it is good For starving eyes and ears to find such food! Good for the slack spine, for the quavering knee, Good for the frightened heart to scent the sea. Oh, dark, slow waters, creeping up these meadows, Resistless, punctual, and mute as shadows, What spirit, smarting, choked with dust and bruised.

Lashed by the jealous hours, by tongues confused, Stunted by small dreams, would not thrill to see, Once more, this pulse-beat of infinity?





### FIFTH AVENUE IN WAR TIME

THE motor-cars go up and down,
The painted ladies sit and smile.
Along the sidewalk, mile on mile,
Parade the dandies of the town.

The latest hat, the latest gown,
The tedium of their souls beguile.
The motor-cars go up and down,
The painted ladies sit and smile.

In wild and icy waters drown

A thousand for a rock-bound isle.

Ten thousand in a black defile

Perish for justice or a crown.

The motor-cars go up and down.

### THE SPRAWLER

(America, 1916)

Who says my brother is base?
Who says he is sunk
From the knight's, the hero's place,
And sleeps on his dollars, drunk,
Fat with feasting and wine?
Who says in his ire
He has lost the gem divine
In the muck and the mire,
At peace in a golden sty?
Not I, my brother, not I!

Ease has not dulled your brain
Nor locked your ears
To mendicants in pain!
Not basely for your gain
You dip in dust your spears!
Tongues that implore
From sea and bloody ground;
Justice from door to door
Whipped like a hound;
Faith, beaten low, shall cry,
Nor by deaf ears be met!
Who says you decay? Not I!
You are noble yet!

You are true, you are brave,
And fire sleeps in your blood!
You would laugh at ease and the grave,
Valiant to save,
If you understood!
Not long should the lie be heard
That you must have gold
Though your fame be slurred
And your flag be sold!

## The Sprawler

Not long should men cry
Their calumnies—
"Though freedom die'
He must have his ease!"
There would be flame in your blood
If you understood!

This earth we gaily ranged
For new sights and new fashions,
Is stricken, changed,
And flung back to old passions.
You dream as though no word
Had been given and broken;
No foolish king, no sword,
No spectre had spoken;
And this war-racked purlieu
Of Hell and outer night
Were the dear earth we knew
That struggled toward a light.

Who says you are base? Not I!
You dream. For a day
You sprawl and stare at the sky
And whistle the world away;
And admonish the wheeling stars,
And expostulate with the storms,
And make an end of wars
With wands and fairy-charms
Of wildflowers, plucked apart.
And lo, as the black ring closes,
With the sword-points at your heart,
You beam, and call them roses.

### X > > S Y Y Y Y Y

- The finisher provide the water of the combine with the first terms.
- Therefore we are given the little winter home charge and the control of
- And the same the grant night he der what's on his grown white
- The state of the second second state of the
- But high on the cleak black headlens the headen water to the sky.
- And the flowes the houses they and the highs in
- And the speaks must be the stars, with a morning leader than fame;
- And the bourts that they sende as they fall country and burst into fame

## Ode of Dedication

Lo, how the spires ascend! Lo, how the arches rise! Lo, how the pinnacles pierce the clouds To melt their glow with the sky's! What miracle, Wyoming? What high roof overspreads, Kansas, your waving fields, New York, your hurrying heads? What roof strains to the stars Over hill, over plain? What Gothic glory covers you both, California, Maine? In Florida, in Idaho, The crystal walls aspire; In Oregon, in Delaware, Sings low the faint, far choir. The valleys feel a sacred stir In every leaf and clod; And from every mountain, every hill, The pillars loom up to God.

### TT

Who said, "It is a booth where doves are sold"?
Who said, "It is a money-changers' cave"?
Silence to such forever, and behold!
It is a vast cathedral, and its nave
And dim-lit transept and broad aisles are filled
With a great nation's millions, on their knees
With new devotion and high fervor thrilled
Offering silver and heart's-ease
And love and life and all sweet, temporal things,
Still to keep bright
The steady light
That stifles in the wake of kings.

## Ode of Dedication

A market-place! they cried?
A lotus-land? They lied!
It is a great cathedral, not with hands
Upraised, but by the spirit's mute commands
Uplifted by the spirit, wall and spire,
To house a nation's purified desire!
A church! Where in hushed fervor stand
The children of contending races,
Forgetting feud and fatherland—
A hundred million lifted faces.

### III

Once more the bugle breaks the April mood.
Once more the march of armies wakes the glen.
Once more the ardor simmers in the blood.
Once more a dream is single lord of men!

From images, from gods of clay,
From idols bright with diadems;
From lips that drew our souls astray
With lure of palaces and gems
And dancing girls and lights and wine
And crowns and power and golden halls;
From pride's penurious Mine and Thine,
Like narrow streets with towering walls;
From painted counterfeits and trash
We turn to the authentic gleam,
Where in the gale and battle thrash
The banners of a holy dream!

Once more a dream is single lord of men!
Yea, we have put aside all little gods!
A dream is captain of the hours again!
And we who were the sod's

## Ode of Dedication

Budding and fading children, with no trust
Or treasury beyond the dust,
Feel on our eyes ethereal finger-tips
Burn like a living coal!—
And gasp to feel the angel at our lips
Call and awake the soul!

Once more a dream is single lord of men! Yea, we will rise and go, and face disaster And want and wounds and death in some far fen, Having no king, but a great dream for master!— To lead us over perilous seas, through trials Of heart and spirit, through long nights of pain, Through agonies of fear, and self-denials, And longing for far friends and comrades slain, And doubt and hate and utter weariness And savage hungers and supreme despairs— Yea, we will go, yea, we will acquiesce, So at the last our children be the heirs Of life, not death; of liberty, not bars! Inheritors not of smooth, ordered things, But of hot struggle and strong hearts, and stars! And questing spirits and fierce gales and wings!

Once more a dream is single lord of men!

Yea, we will go and we will close dear doors
Of hope, and many an airy denizen
Of the dear land of Maybe and the shores
Of the enchanted islands of Perchance,
We will face, hand in hand and eye in eye,
Too full of pain for any utterance
Save the last halting murmur, "So—good-bye."
For we will part from other friends than those
Who wear this garment of dissolving flesh
And die for dreams. Yea, softly we will close
The gates of twilit gardens cool and fresh,

# Ode of Dedication

Where, with the great immortals amid flowers And bright immortal birds and billowy trees, We held high converse and forgot the hours. Remembering Truth and Beauty. Even to these Beloved ghosts we also speak farewell.

### IV

We will arise and go, not ignorant Wherefore or at what price we go to sell This bundle of bright hopes we covenant Unto a dream. Our price is a new world! Immortal Dream! The fettered shall be free! Yea, not these only! All, who fettered lie! Oh, Dream, who wilt not let us bow the knee, Let not one dragon's downfall satisfy Our reawakened passion for free hands. Free-ranging and unsaddled spirits, born To race against the wind on wide sea-strands And thunder up high glens! Oh, silver horn, Calling us forth, help us remember, yea, Even now help us remember, while the Snake

Sprawls yet unconquered on the world's highway And hills and vales at his approaching shake,

Help us remember that the high crusade

Whereon we here embark calls forth the free In hosts with spears and flaunting flags arrayed, Not for one dragon's end, one victory,

One last great war, but to unending war

Without, within, till God's white torch, supreme, Melt the last chain; and the last dungeon-door Swing slowly wide to the triumphant dream!

> God, who gavest men eyes To see a dream; God, who gavest men heart To follow the Gleam;

# Ode of Dedication

God, who gavest men stars
To find Heaven by;
God, who madest men glad
At need to die;
Lord, from the hills again
We hear thy drum!
God, who lovest free men,
God, who lovest free men,
God, who lovest free men,
Lead on! We come.

## PRAYER DURING BATTLE

Lord, in this day of battle, Lord, in this night of fears, Keep open, oh, keep open My eyes, my ears.

Not blindly, not in hatred, Lord, let me do my part. Keep open, oh, keep open My mind, my heart.

#### RESURRECTION

Not long did we lie on the torn red field of pain.

We fell, we lay, we slumbered, we took rest,

With the wild nerves quiet at last, and the vext brain

Cleared of the wingèd nightmares, and the breast Freed of the heavy dreams of hearts afar.

We rose at last under the morning star.

We rose and greeted our brothers and welcomed our foes.

We rose, like the wheat when the wind is over, we rose.

With shouts we rose, with gasps and incredulous cries,

With bursts of singing, and silence, and awestruck eyes;

Like babes, refreshed from sleep, like children we rose,

Brimming with deep content from our dreamless repose.

And, "What do you call it?" asked one. "I thought I was dead."

"You are," cried another. "We're all of us dead and flat."

"I'm alive as a cricket. There's something wrong with your head."

They stretched their limbs and argued it out where they sat.

And over the wide field, friend and foe Spoke of small things, remembering not old woe Of war and hunger, hatred and fierce words. They sat and listened to the brooks and birds And watched the starlight perish in pale flame,

Wondering what God would look like when He came.

### THE BOY IN ARMOR

The place is dark. Gradually the spectral figure of a young soldier stands revealed, luminous, as though lit by an inner light. Behind him are vaguely defined shadows; their number is countless; they stretch away into the darkness, a great multitude.

## The Soldier Speaks

TREMBLE, O world! Bow down! Cringe! Be afraid!

You look on ghosts! Not one alone! Ten thousand!

And yet again ten thousand, and again Ten thousand, and again to the bleak rim Of this dear earth where there could be such living, Such labor and such climbing of green hills,

Ten thousand times ten thousand shapes—with eyes!

Eyes that are living, eyes that are fires! Young eyes!

They do not blink; they do not waver; they watch. Bow down, bow down! Open your hearts! And hear!

We are your sons. You lured us to your homes With talk of love and mirth and the high music That the heart makes when it goes out with flutes Along the highway, celebrating love.

With warmth you lured us, with the hearth-fire blazing,

With open, clean hands, tables cleanly set,
White beds and books and birds and songs and
friends.

And mountain-tops to win and seas to conquer, Green things to marvel at, far isles to long for; With love you lured us and with loveliness!

# The Boy in Armor

Remember! Now that we are ghosts, remember! You said no word of hate and slaughter! Not one!
Of wars you breathed no blighting syllable!
You trumpeted the call of beauty down
The heavenly valleys and we heard and came.
You blew no harsh reveille of guns and battle.
You trapped our unborn innocence with love.

Tremble, for we have eyes!

We are your sons and we are ghosts. We came To love, to labor, and to know. We died Before we loved, before we learned to labor, Before we knew more than the fairy tales You murmured to beguile our puzzled ears. You cried across the worlds, and called us sons! We came as sons, but what you made of us Were bleeding shapes upon an altar, slain To appease your sodden idol where he sits Muttering dead words and chewing at old bones.

Because you would not think, we had to die!
We have been loyal. We have fought for you,
And suffered of the cold, and starved for you,
And miserably laid our bodies down
Before your idol, while the incense rose.
Weep not for us, but for your own trapped souls.
We died. And there you stand, no step advanced!
And after all, when you have set more millions
Beside our millions, and beside them yet
More millions of brave fellows who die well,
You still will have to wake some day—and think.

Bow down, and hear! You have more sons than these;

And they have fancies and imaginings

# The Boy in Armor

And dauntless spirits and hearts made for love, And clean hands and clean eyes and high desires. They will go forth and die if you command As we have died, since they love liberty Even as we loved her and would give her cause The only gift they are aware is theirs.

Wake, dreaming world! Think, O gray world bewitched!

Out through untraveled spaces where no mind Has dared to venture, let your sails be spread! Remember, world, this is the age of wings! Beyond the clouds the stars are, and the stars Will not forever vainly wait the aëronaut Who shall uncover laws to lift men up More potent than the laws that drag men down.

Seek them, old men! Young men, go forth and find them!
We dead keep watch! You shall not sleep nor rest.
We died. And now you others who must live Shall do a harder thing than dying is—
For you shall think! And ghosts shall drive you on!

### WARRIORS OF THE DREAM

They pushed their glowing joys aside,
They laid their shining hopes away;
They hearkened, pale and starry-eyed,
And closed the books and dropped the play.
They said, "There is a greater thing
Than fame or golden harvesting.
Out of the storm there came a cry
And we will answer, though we die!"

They answered from the seething plain,
They answered from the reeling height,
To the last reaching-forth, in pain,
They sent their answer down the night:

"Though hope allure and love enthrall
And precious, youth and glory seem,
Sweeter than all, greater than all,
Is to give all to a dream!"

They will not come again to play
The old games through the summer day,
Or seek the cool woods or the brooks
Or open now the dusty books.
Yet, where in crowds, with restless feet,
The getters and the spenders meet,
There is, at times, a strange deep sound
Not from the sky, not from the ground,
And voices such as music hath
That shakes the heart and chokes the breath:
"Though hope allure and love enthrall
And precious, youth and glory seem,
Sweeter than all, greater than all,
Is to give all to a dream!"

# Warriors of the Dream

On its old orbit swings this earth;
Day comes, night comes; the seasons pass;
And holy memories, amid mirth,
Are but as shadows on a glass.
Men may forget and Time erase
Of name and deed the last faint trace;
But in still hours, amid their joys,
Unborn, undreamed of girls and boys
Shall of a sudden be aware
Of something not of earth or air,
A burning brow, a glowing eye,
A flame, a presence, and a cry:

"Though hope allure and love enthrall And precious, youth and glory seem, Sweeter than all, greater than all, Is to give all to a dream!"

THE END









